paddy during kharif 2008-09 is estimated to be more than that during kharif 2007-08. However, the production of bajra, maize, tur and oilseeds during kharif 2008-09 is lower than their respective production during kharif 2007-08. Barley is a rabi crop and will be sown during the coming rabi season. While lower production of the above mentioned crops may lead to some rise in their prices depending on other factors like international prices and import/export of these commodities, food safety is not likely to be affected adversely.

(c) and (d) It is envisaged to bring additional area under different crops during rabi 2008-09 which would compensate for the loss in production during kharif 2008-09. Government has also taken several steps to bridge the gap between demand and supply of essential commodities and contain inflation which include reducing import duties to zero for rice, wheat, pulses, edible oils (crude), maize, butter and ghee; banning export of non-bastmati rice, wheat, some edible oils and pulses (except kabuli channa); imposition of stock limit orders in case of rice, wheat, pulses, edible oils and oilseeds; delisting all contracts of tur and urad in forward markets; banning future contracts in wheat and rice; suspending futures trading in soya oil, potato, chana and rubber upto 30.11.2008 and authorizing NAFED to import 1.5 million tonnes of pulses during 2008-09; among other.

Steps to promote agricultural growth

782. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Bank has advised the Union Government to shift focus on agriculture to resolve the food crisis;

(b) if so, whether any steps are being taken to promote agricultural growth, Statewise;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the measures taken in Andhra Pradesh;

(d) whether the small farmers have been benefited in Andhra Pradesh because of the above, district-wise; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

National bamboo mission in North-East region

783. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the implementation status of National Bamboo Mission with special reference to the States of North-East Region; and

(b) the proposed plan for execution during Eleventh Five Year Plan in NER?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs on its meeting held on 27th October, 2006 approved a Centrally Sponsored Scheme entitled "National Bamboo Mission" under the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation for the financial year 2006-07 of the Tenth Plan and first four years (2007-2011) of the Eleventh Five Year Plan at a total outlay of Rs.56823 lakh. The scheme is being implemented in 27 States including those of North-East Region in the country. During the current